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Chapter 2

Defining Facilitative Leadership: A View from Inside the Mayor's Office in Lawrence, Kansas

John Nalbandian and Sarah Negrón

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“On occasion ... a city commissioner becomes mayor and actually functions as more than a ribbon cutter, presiding officer, and symbolic head. In recent years, this occurred only when John Nalbandian, a student of city management, twice served as mayor for a year. ... He had the gumption to run for office, and he took his election seriously. He listened—at least most of the time—to his constituents. Then (and here’s the rub) he’d make up his mind and seek to move forward with what he thought was the best program ... that he thought he could get the commission to support.”

Burdett Loomis

Political Scientist, University of Kansas (2001, 413)

2.1 Introduction

What follows is a difficult but welcomed assignment. A social scientist is expected to be objective and analytical, but that is difficult when you are the subject of your own investigation. I will attempt to meet social science standards with what I believe are objective observations and will alert the reader when my own feelings or interests assert themselves.* But, I will also add a perspective that is not normally possible when the investigator is separated from the subject. I will comment on how the definitions of mayoral leadership in the literature relate to my own mayoral experience. I will identify revisions or additions that I feel should be made to better explain what it means to be a mayor.

For me, the opening quote nicely sets the stage for this chapter on my work as a facilitative mayor. Two parts of the quote stand out. First, the facilitative mayor is not a political neutral who solely advances the work of others. The effective mayor has a mind of his/her own. But, secondly, he/she moves within the context of a governing body and this involves helping other elected officials understand and realize their collective will. One must be able to act in ways that help structure political issues, facilitate the governing body’s work, and instill community confidence. In short, an effective, facilitative mayor must act in ways that others respect sufficiently enough to alter their own attitudes or behavior, including their votes. But, it also involves acknowledging and advancing council goals, especially if you do not object to them.

Council–manager government naturally encourages a facilitative mayoral role if only because the mayor’s formal authority is so limited. While citizens, the city’s professional staff, outside agencies and governmental units, and many members of the council itself expect the mayor to provide leadership, he or she is required to

* This chapter is written in first person because it is the account of my experience as mayor. My co-author Sarah Negrón participated fully in the preparation of this chapter.

do so as a member of a governing body and in partnership with the city's professional staff. For me, the word *engagement* succinctly captures the role of the effective facilitative mayor. The mayor engages issues, citizens and community groups, the professional staff, and, most importantly, the mayor's number one constituency—the other council members.

I begin this chapter with some background information about the city of Lawrence. I follow with a section on campaigning to feature the ad hoc nature of local politics and how important loyalty is in politics, along with a very brief section on what it is like to be a professor of government *and* an elected official. Then I introduce some general comments about politics in the local governments I have worked with over the years as a trainer and consultant, also drawing upon my academic career and real life experience as an elected official for perspective. Finally, I have some case examples to illustrate the way I acted as a facilitative mayor. Throughout the chapter, I include quotes from a journal that I kept during my eight years in office.

2.2 Context

Lawrence, Kansas, had a population of about 72,000 in 1991. It has since grown to some 90,000 and is home to two universities: the University of Kansas and Haskell Indian Nations University. While the city has a large student population, for the most part, the students are uninvolved in local politics. Despite a lack of student involvement, Lawrence citizens are highly educated with a significant number actively engaged in local politics. Thus, many well-articulated interests come to bear on the commission's policy decisions.

Lawrence is located about an hour from the Kansas City metropolitan area, an hour from the airport, and forty-five minutes from the state capital in Topeka. We are a full service city, which means that the city offers services like providing water, managing storm water, operating a sewage treatment plant, and operating and maintaining its own parks and recreation programs. Separate authorities in some metropolitan areas might provide these kinds of services and others. Even though we are close to a major metropolitan area, we still are a free-standing city, not a suburb. The megaisue in Lawrence for the past thirty years is how we can grow and yet retain our identity, which geographically is centered in an ideal college-town downtown.

Since the early 1950s, Lawrence has been a council-manager city. The form is very well accepted, and even though we elect our five commissioners at-large, we rarely fail to elect a politically representative commission—especially reflecting perspectives on growth. Even though we have a 12 percent minority population, we rarely if ever have had a minority member of the community on the ballot. Economically, we are in good shape; we spend money frugally. The city commission reluctantly approves property tax increases when unavoidable. We swing back and forth around growth issues and, over time, there is balance. In the past thirty

years, we have had only three city managers, and the last two had previously been assistant city managers in Lawrence.

By tradition, mayors serve one-year terms. The mayor's role largely is ceremonial, but as in other council-manager cities, citizens look to the mayor for leadership, and the commission does not resent mayoral leadership as long as it is not high-handed. I cannot remember a time when a mayor was selected because of a specific agenda. Mayoral agendas tend to rise from the issues at hand, with the mayor attaching to a few that are consistent with campaign promises either explicit or implied.

Elections for the five-member commission are held in the spring every two years. If more than six candidates formally declare their intent to run, a primary election reduces the field to six. I cannot remember when we did not have a primary election. Of the six candidates running in the general election, the top three vote getters are elected to the commission. The top two serve a four-year term while the third-place candidate serves a two-year term. The council selects the mayor, and, by tradition, the two top vote getters each serve a one-year term as mayor. I was elected to the city commission in 1991 in second place and served as mayor from 1993 to 1994. I was reelected to the commission in 1995 as the top candidate, served as mayor from 1996 to 1997, and completed my second term as commissioner in 1999. I chose not to run again.

2.3 The Campaign and the Decision to Run

My family and I came to the University of Kansas in 1976. Soon after we arrived, I remember a knock on our door at home preceding a gubernatorial election. "Hello, I'm John Carlin. I am the Democratic candidate for governor, and I would like your vote." We had come from Los Angeles where I had completed my doctoral studies and where I had grown up, and that NEVER happened in L.A. I thought to myself, "John, you can become anything you want in this town!" It is not as if I planned from this time to run for office; in fact, it rarely entered my mind. But, I knew that if I wanted to run for office, I could—anyone could.

I think I have been the president of every club, organization, or group I have belonged to since I was a kid. I have been the faculty's choice to chair the public administration department at the University of Kansas on two different occasions for a total of twelve years. So, I am accustomed to being the center of attention, and I like it. I became department chair in the mid-1980s, and, combined with my faculty responsibilities, it was more than a full-time job. The University of Kansas is known for its local government emphasis in public administration, and even though I did not come to KU as an expert in local government, one is expected to learn. So, I learned. When I finished my five-year term as department chair, I wrote a book on professionalism in local government and, when that was completed, I thought, "I ought to run for city commission." It was not a plan. It was not urged upon me by others. I just thought it would be an interesting thing to do. I had always been

politically aware, but never really politically involved in campaigns, and I knew very few people in Lawrence outside of the university. Normally, this would be a disadvantage. But, the university is a strong political base for one of its own, and in terms of credibility within the university, being a professor of government started me off on the right foot. As KU Political Science Professor Loomis noted, "The chamber of commerce recruits its candidates, and a loose coalition of neighborhoods recruits its own. With occasional exception (Nalbandian comes to mind), candidates win with most of their backing from one faction or another." (2001)

I met Dan W. (I have omitted all last names) playing weekend basketball with a group of adults. I think Dan had been politically involved forever. Another teammate and friend of Dan's was a state senator. When I was thinking about running, I talked with Dan who later became my chief campaign advisor. Dan told me two things. First, he said, "You have to smile more." Second, he advised me to start talking with people to learn about issues. He gave me names of people to talk with, and then one name led to another until I had talked with quite a few people. I began these conversations in the summer of 1990. If I was going to run, I was going to give it a legitimate try even if it meant spending over six months in preparation.

Journal Entry: January 19, 1991

Carol (my spouse) reminded me that a lot of my support has come from the guys I used to play basketball with on Sundays: Dan and Bob T., and to a lesser degree from Wint with his letter, Steve H. with his encouraging words and offer to help, Mike W., Bird, and Paul S. Dan is the key and I can't see why he would be helping me like he is if we hadn't gotten to know each other better through basketball. I think we really enjoyed playing on the same team. This is the "old boys" network in action. It is supplemented by the years I spent working academically with Nader S., who has always displayed more loyalty to me than vice versa. Also, it is cemented with my relationship with Wendy M., which began when she was working with IPPBR (a university research center).

The lesson I learned initially from my involvement in politics focused on the importance of loyalty. We all casually talk about loyalty, but to a politician, it is the glue that binds relationships. The most important lesson for administrative professionals to learn is that organizational structure is crucial to their competence. For the professional

- There is always someone in authority above you.
- There are position descriptions.
- There are performance evaluations.
- There are established ways of getting things done that either are set out in policy and rules, or are learned as practices over time.

Once you enter the local political arena, you confront the reality that, for the most part, politics is unstructured; it can be haphazard and even chaotic. You have to create structure and order for yourself and those around you who want to work for you and with you. While employees rely on organizational structure for predictability and reliability, in politics loyalty can substitute for the absence of formal structure and established relationships.

Campaigns are about two things. First, you need a good candidate. There is no substitute for a candidate who is electable—a person who people can attach to intellectually or emotionally, or in some combination. Second, you need organization, and you have to create it in nonpartisan contests because it does not exist in the way that a new employee walks into an organization with its structure, roles, and statuses. Every campaign has key individuals. Some campaigns are more organized than others. Some involve the candidate as a key organizer and others do not. I was fortunate in my first campaign to have a person, Dan W., who had been involved in politics all his life.

Journal Entry: November 12, 1990

Dan picked out of our conversation and focused on “Invest in the future with respect for the past” as a possible main campaign theme. As we talked, he jotted notes about complementary themes and issues that I would have to work (develop positions) on: tax abatements; team builder and catalyst; a person who can make things happen while sensitive to process; independent thinker, thoughtful, and capable; family diversity suggests comfort with community diversity; dichotomous issues fail to capture real sentiments of Lawrence citizens—no one wants no growth or unlimited growth.

He and I developed thirty- to sixty-second responses to all the questions we thought people would ask during campaign forums. I memorized them. Dan was very good. He made sure that everything he wrote was something I could own up to. He asked me time and again, “Are you sure you believe this?” It is so easy in a campaign to tell people what they want to hear. You are the focus—always—and the attention is beguiling. You do not want to discourage the attention; it energizes people working on your campaign, and it is one of the attractions of holding office, but you do not want to be hijacked by it.

My campaigns were pretty traditional for Lawrence at the time. We raised money with letters and phone calls. We bought newspaper advertisements, printed and then handed out brochures, made telephone calls, and participated in numerous candidate forums. We posted hundreds of yard signs. I did not know about any of this stuff when I first started in 1990. But I learned, and a few years after I left office I headed a friend’s campaign—we lost.

What really surprised me about running for office was the number of people who wanted to work on the campaign. I remember Randi T. calling and saying

that in every city commission election she chose one candidate she would work for, and she would like to work for me. She became the “sign lady” and she did a great job—during both of my campaigns. But as strange as this may seem, I rarely talked with her during my eight years in office. This is true of others as well. I had a team of people working for me, but, after the election, the team dissolves and most people go their separate ways.

Journal Entry: April 1, 1991

I am particularly struck by the initiative others took on my behalf. “D” mailed some forty letters to people he knew. Lew T. mailed some one hundred invitations to a coffee and said he was going to make phone calls for me. Nancy C. mailed postcards and so did Larry M. Randi T. accepted all kinds of responsibility. Dulcy S. organized all the Quail Run brochures into routes. Paul D. (now a state representative) was indispensable with yard signs. Unbelievable!

Because, in Lawrence, we all run at-large, it does not make sense to run a negative campaign focusing on any specific individual in the election. This influenced how I prepared for the candidate forums and what kind of material we put in my brochures and other mailings. I was a university professor of government, and we were trying to project the image of a candidate who was knowledgeable and who could put that knowledge to work in a facilitative fashion. In order to do that, I needed not only to make sure I knew about issues, but I had to mount an issue-oriented campaign.

Campaigning is exhilarating and debilitating depending on which hour of the day it is. I remember a cold January in Lawrence when I was knocking on doors, and the reception was miserable. “You are running for what?” “What is your name?” “When is the election?” Then, we wised up and got the names and addresses of people who had voted in the last local election from the County Clerk’s office. On a particular block I might visit only three or four homes, but the reception was amazing. “Yes, I know who you are.” “I have a question for you.” “What do you think about...?” Or, even better, “I’m planning to vote for you!”

The first time I received a campaign contribution in the mail from a person I did not know, I realized, “There is no backing out now.” Up to this time, as a candidate, you are surrounded by people whom you know or have come to know. Then, you receive a check from someone you do NOT know—what did they see, hear, or think that led them to send the check? You never really know the answer, but you campaign confidently as if you do.

2.4 Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships

No major issue that comes to a legislative body has a “right” answer. You can search as long as you like and you can request as much information as you like, but

ultimately it is going to boil down to creating a solution or policy that engages conflicting values like representation, efficiency, equity, and individual rights. The goal is working to build, maintain, and preserve a sense of community that is forged over time from the way these values play themselves out.

With the tremendous challenges that governing bodies face in their goal of community building and working with conflicting values, individual commissioners confront working conditions that they are unlikely to have faced before. In all of your working life, how many jobs have you had where there wasn't a supervisor, boss, or someone in charge and responsible? On the commission, no one is *in charge*. No matter how much power the mayor may accrue, his/her authority is limited. When commissioners disagree, the mayor cannot say, "I have heard enough, this is what we are going to do."

When one couples the fundamental value conflicts in policy making with the lack of authority, one sees the importance of facilitative leadership—the theme of this book. But facilitative leadership is not formulaic, even though it provides a nice conceptual lens. Because of the ambiguity that the value conflicts and lack of authority pose, politics is *socially constructed*; in other words, it is framed by largely unwritten, but understood, sets of expectations and obligations among commissioners that are developed and reinforced over time. No one knows how a complex political issue is going to turn out. Political issues unfold like the skin of an onion where there is no middle. You just keep unfolding and unfolding as leadership works toward a solution that will join what is politically acceptable with what is administratively feasible, all the while aiming toward building and preserving community identity and vitality.

More conceptually, I think it is possible to chart what kinds of bridges the facilitative mayor works to build. I have written elsewhere about the conflicting forces of administrative modernization and citizen involvement (Nalbandian 2005). Each of these forces is powerfully affecting governance at the local level, and they create tension that can be viewed along five dimensions. While the concept of citizen engagement is commonly understood, administrative modernization may not be. It includes adoption of innovations relating to areas such as performance management, performance measurement and benchmarking, goal-based performance appraisal, quality assurance, and performance budgeting, as well as the application of technology to the routinization of administration processes including uses of the geographic information system/global positioning system (GIS/GPS).

I will not discuss these five dimensions in detail. It is enough to see how there are gaps that in my judgment are growing and can be charted along the five dimensions as seen in Table 2.1. It is critical to bridge the gaps because the space between the two trends represents the distance between what is *administratively feasible* (represented by the modernization column) and what is *politically acceptable* (represented by the citizen involvement column). Those individuals who can help bridge these gaps add value to their communities because they are connecting the spheres of politics and administration. In a nutshell, this is the most valuable connection

Table 2.1 Gaps between Modernizing and Civic Engagement Perspectives

| <i>Modernizing the Organization</i> | <i>Gaps</i> | <i>Civic Involvement</i> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Professional staff | | Elected officials |
| 2. Departments | | Chief administrative officer |
| 3. Institutions | | Community-based politics |
| 4. Specialist | | Citizen focus and community problems |
| 5. Policy | | Place |

that the mayor can facilitate because effective action can only result when these spheres come together effectively.

In retrospect, my goal as a commissioner was to help make these connections, and as mayor, I could take more of the lead than I could as a commissioner. The social construction comes into the picture as the mayor, in concert with the governing body, learns how to do this—how one joins others, cajoles others, learns from others, and persuades others in developing common frames, and then works toward consensus solutions so that bridges are built and the onion unfolds with implicit purpose, even if unpredictably. In retrospect, the path taken to resolve an issue makes sense, but when one is in the middle of the debate, it can feel like wandering hopelessly in a meandering stream.

The mayor's role is a set of expectations derived from personal expectations and from the expectations of those in various policy arenas, including the city's staff. The sometimes complementary and sometimes conflicting expectations create the working definition of the role. In crafting and enacting the role of mayor, one's self cannot be denied. The self initiates structure and is expressed through the structure that is created. Political ambiguity has to be reduced in order for competent work to occur. As mayor, I could see myself describing issues and ways of approaching them that were natural to me as a person, which naturally empowered my role as mayor. When elected officials now seek my advice, I tell them, "You have to deploy your strengths in ways that facilitate the work of the commission, and in ways that others will value." Your strengths are key because they help reduce the ambiguity just as much as the expectations that others have of you in your role as mayor. But, you have to deploy your strengths in ways that others value. It does no good to make decisions that result in comfort for you if they make work difficult for others, including the city's professional staff.

My strengths are very clear to me. I can conceptualize, organize, and collaborate, and I am flexible. It is who I am and what I do. I did it in high school and in college, and I have gotten used to working this way. It is what works for me

This is the kind of thing that I am good at—thinking broadly and inclusively and then working to strategize. It is hard to make an impact with these skills as one commissioner, but as mayor it's a lot easier because people listen to you; they think you have more power than you actually have. Whereas, Commissioner W. used to tell people as mayor that he had just one of five votes, I don't remind anyone of that fact. I just try to move things along, focusing especially on inclusive projects."

One noticeable lesson from these vignettes is that the facilitative mayor who knows his/her strengths puts him/herself in the position of permitting others to play off them. We can see how others knew not only my interests, but also they knew my style, and they took advantage of it to advance what they wanted. I think this is an under-appreciated value of the facilitative mayor. He/she encourages similar behavior in others because that is what he/she responds to, and getting an influential mayor on your side is important to an advocate or interest group no matter how virtuous their cause.

2.5 Professor as Mayor

In Lawrence, Nalbandian was perhaps the perfect mayor in that the community is truly dedicated to the city manager form of government. Nalbandian was an elected official with the intellect and soul of a manager. (Loomis 2001)

Loomis' quote is on the mark. Even though I do not have the skill or temperament to be a city or county manager, I did understand the work prior to my first election based on extensive academic exposure, my interest, and connections to city management professionals nationwide. In a council-manager government, there are three crucial sets of relationships: with citizens and community groups, with other governing body members, and with the city's professional staff. I think for some council members, the staff partnership is the most difficult to grasp, in large part because so many council members do not have executive work experience in large, complex organizations. They do not necessarily have the experience to help them understand administrative complexity. But they are told they are in charge; they are supposed to set direction, and they have oversight responsibility for operations they often know little about compared to the professional staff. They are confronted with agendas that are ninety percent staff-driven. Nearly all of the problems they deal with are brought to them by the staff they are supposed to oversee and direct.

Frankly, I had few of these challenges. I basically knew about the governing body and staff relationship when I was elected. I trusted the staff. I knew the city manager and assistant. They respected me and vice versa. There is a word of caution here. Forms of government are different, and form does matter. I am a professor of

public administration in a department that specializes in council–manager government. If I were a political scientist who was expert in the federal government (which means a structure based on a separation of powers), I might have a difficult time understanding the roles and relationships that are set out in council–manager government, and I think that is an issue of confusion for some new commissioners.

In sum, my knowledge helped me a great deal, and I enjoyed learning what I did not know: about utilities, planning, and storm water management. But, in the end, it is not only about knowledge, good governance is about judgment. I wrote for a city newsletter in 1999:

People often ask me what it is like teaching government and being an elected official. My answer has been the same from the beginning, and it surprised me. “There is not a lot of difference.” Every Tuesday night we face the single most important question any political theorist asks: What should be the role of government? (*City Newsletter*, 1999)

2.6 Cases

I am going to illustrate two points with two cases. The first case will show how the facilitative mayor uses his/her authority and power to convene important conversations around issues he/she and the community care about. The second case will show how politics unfold in uncertain ways, and how the facilitative mayor must be flexible.

2.6.1 The Sales Tax

Early in my first term, I wondered why we had put ourselves in a reactive mode when it came to recreation facilities and programs. I particularly recall the Youth Sports Incorporated (YSI) nonprofit soccer group coming in several times asking for various improvements to our soccer fields. At one point at a commission meeting I asked whether it would be desirable to have a plan—a parks and recreation master plan. I had not thought this out beforehand, it was purely contextual. The commission agreed, and the Parks and Recreation staff was overjoyed at the commission’s direction.

We hired a consultant who held community meetings to supplement his expertise, and he produced a plan. The question then became, “How do we fund the plan?” At that time, I was mayor for the first time. I had in the back of my mind for some time that a dedicated sales tax might be a feasible revenue source. As events unfolded, however, there were complicating factors. The school district, which for a number of years had been trying unsuccessfully to convince the community that Lawrence should have a second high school, finally had made its case successfully, and they were ready to put a bond issue on the April ballot. The county was being lobbied

heavily by the Public Health Department, Visiting Nurses Association, and the Bert Nash Mental Health Center for more room, as the hospital's expansion was reducing available space for these agencies whose services were growing. Also, the county jail was overcrowded, and we needed new facilities. This was the financial environment we confronted as we were discussing the parks and recreation master plan.

The key event occurred when I used my position as mayor to call a meeting with Gary T., the executive director of the chamber of commerce, and Dan W., the president of the chamber and my former campaign director. Gary was especially important because he was a long-range thinker—which connected the two of us—and no bond issue passes in Lawrence without the chamber's backing. It is a progressive chamber, so that is not a great stumbling block, and they can mobilize their members as voters.

At our lunch meeting, I asked them how we could sequence elections so that the city, county, and school district would not be proposing competing bond issues. We talked and we talked, and then a light bulb flashed for Gary. He said that we should not sequence the votes, we should combine them. We should propose a countywide sales tax that would fund the city's and county's projects, and we should use the sales tax to reduce the property tax the equivalent amount it would take in a school district property tax increase to pay for the second high school. In effect, we could get the parks and recreation master plan, the jail, the health facilities, *and* the high school for a one-cent sales tax and no increase in property tax. It was brilliant, and it worked.

It worked in part because I had lent my mayoral status to help those who were already supporting more city, county, and school district cooperation. I suggested some cooperation, but mostly, I was just the voice for sentiments that others desired. I think this is one role that the facilitative mayor plays: You lend your status to others for projects that they are pushing and with which you agree. This cooperative base provided a framework to test out Gary's idea, which, of course, became associated with me because I was the one who publicly pushed it. As I look back on my eight years, this sales tax vote and the creative way we combined projects was my greatest accomplishment.

2.6.2 Municipal Golf Course

I'm not sure I'm supposed to be talking to you. Can you look yourself in the mirror with any integrity?

Stan H.

Lawrence Municipal Golf Course Committee

Construction of Lawrence's municipal golf course is an issue that preceded my election and spanned both of my terms as commissioner. When I ran for city commission in 1991, a local advocacy group—the Lawrence Municipal Golf Course Committee—pledged

to support me in exchange for my written support of their desire for a municipal golf course. I play golf and indicated to them that I favored reviewing this proposal and bringing it to the commission for consideration. My name was in newspaper ads that they placed supporting the candidates who favored a municipal golf course.

During my tenure as a new commissioner, we did consider construction of a municipal golf course on land to be leased from the Army Corps of Engineers. The commission was in favor of the plan, but two more public golf course options became available: A private golf course offered to sell their existing course to the city; another privately owned golf complex (offering a driving range and mini golf) presented plans to build an 18-hole course. The commission chose to allow the second businessman to pursue construction of a new course instead of pursuing the new municipal course option because it would achieve the same end result—increased capacity and affordable golfing for the general public—without expenditure of public funds. I supported that option.

In a newspaper interview after we entertained other proposals, I said, “I think what we agreed to in the campaign was the concept of a municipal golf course. ... I think that, in endorsing Mr. G’s proposal, all the goals and objectives of a municipal course are met. I don’t think we’re backtracking at all. It’s just that the conditions are different from what they were.” (King 1991)

This is an example of where my flexibility and my desire to facilitate the work of others rather than taking a strong, consistent stand worked against me and the city. From the perspective of the Municipal Golf Course Committee, I had sold out. The quote opening this section was made to me in commission chambers after the meeting where we endorsed the private initiative. I learned something from this experience. To facilitate you have to be respected. With only six months in office, I had not earned the respect needed in order to change my mind and still be seen as a credible commissioner. Thus, even though I was trying to facilitate the building of a golf course (the ultimate goal), my facilitative methods failed because I did not have the needed resources. I had lost the respect and loyalty of the Golf Course Committee.

“They’ve accused us of having no integrity. And I’m really angry about that,” Nalbandian said. “They failed to acknowledge that anything is different now than during the spring. In the spring, we had one option, the municipal golf course. Now we have two options. Why wouldn’t any reasonable person look at both options?” (Toplikar 1991)

To make a long story short, none of the private initiatives panned out, and the Golf Course Association proved correct. It was not until 1996 when, ironically, the golf course had been included in the new parks and recreation master plan (for which I received a lot of credit) that we finally began construction.

I was the mayor in 1996 and 1997, and because I played golf and had been an initiator of the master plan and the sales tax initiative, I became the governing body’s representative on this project. I went out with the construction team and they took

me on a tour of what they were doing. My picture was in the paper, and I became reincarnated as champion of the golf course. It is so strange now to have people refer to me as the "father of our golf course," in light of what Stan H. said to me in 1991.

Lawrence's Eagle Bend Golf Course opened to the public on July 18, 1998. While on the city commission at the time, I was not the mayor when it came time to cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of the course. When the mayor is at a ribbon cutting in Lawrence, by tradition the mayor speaks on behalf of the city commission. But at the end of Mayor K.'s remarks, he invited me to come to the podium and say a few words. That kind of political generosity is not lost among commissioners. His wife gave me a handmade Christmas card with my picture as part of the first foursome to play Eagle Bend.

As a side note to this story, when people used to call me the "father of the golf course," I would object and say that others had a very large role to play and that I was only one of a majority vote. After a while, I learned that people do not want to hear that. They really want to believe that someONE made a difference. As an elected official, it is foolish time and again to try and deflect credit that people want to give you as long as you understand that "it is really not about you."

In the two cases presented above, you can see how the world of administration is represented by a parks and recreation master plan. Master plans are a fundamental tool of administrative work, representing the culmination of "data, subplans, and reports." They exemplify administrative work as they create legitimized documents upon which professional analysis and recommendations can be made. The world of politics is messier. From the cases, it is clear that the notion of starting with a goal, creating a desired path with alternatives, and then working toward the desired end is not the politics I experienced. That world consisted symbolically of "passion, dreams, and stories" and it proceeded in fits and starts. Further, the facilitative mayor does not always choose his/her partners. As mayor, I relied on my connections, the connections of others, and their passion and dreams for energy and support, in order to collectively construct messages that we believed the electorate would find compelling as they considered a public vote on the sales tax, for example.

2.7 Conclusions

One lesson stands out for me about being a mayor and city commissioner: Respect and loyalty leading to trust count above all other elements for a facilitative mayor. Because a facilitative mayor does not have the authority of a chief executive, he/she has to continually cultivate less formal sources of influence. This is where respect, loyalty, and trust come in. Respect is necessary so that people will listen to you, and I think each elected official earns respect in different ways. I was a logical, big picture thinker who took others into consideration, and my respect for others was reciprocated. The one phone call I remember in all my eight years on the commission came from a citizen a couple of nights after we had made a decision about downtown. The

caller, who I was acquainted with, but whom I did not count as a supporter of mine, said he had read the paper and was surprised at my vote because he considered it antidowntown. He went on to say that he knew I was a reasonable person, and he was calling because he wanted to know why I voted the way I did. This one phone call reinforced for me the idea that if one is true to one's beliefs and one's way of treating others respectfully, that respect will be recognized and returned.

While citizen respect is important, as I stated earlier, the respect of the other members of the governing body is most valued. It has to be continually earned and nurtured because it is so valuable yet fragile. Our commission requires three votes to pass a motion, and a facilitative mayor always is thinking, "How do we get this done?" Other commissioners may be content to say what they think needs to be heard, but the facilitative mayor is action-oriented.

Loyalty based on position, threats, or incentives is fleeting; loyalty built on respect can last. And, as I have indicated earlier, loyalty is the glue. To have someone's respect, loyalty, and trust enables you to look down the dais and with a nod of the head understand that you have someone's vote or he or she has yours. It is connecting to Mayor K., who went out of his way at the golf course ribbon cutting to invite me to speak for a project that he knew would help define my terms in office.

There are all kinds of opportunities to break trust, lose respect, and trash loyalty. I remember a particularly difficult night when I became pretty visibly and vocally upset at another commissioner, and he at me. After the meeting, he came over to me, held out his hand, and said "No hard feelings?" What can you say to that? You shake his hand, and you remember his generous gift of civility—one commissioner to another—and you try to learn from it.

I want to end on a personal note. I was in my first term on the city commission and the mayor had finished her one-year term and was stepping down. It is customary for other commissioners to make remarks and for the outgoing mayor to say a few words before the new mayor is sworn in. The outgoing mayor said that being mayor was the highlight of her life. Arrogantly, I thought to myself, "She must have led a pretty diminished life if this was it!" Little did I know. Now as I look back at everything that I learned about city government, about all the people I met, about all the projects we worked on, there is nothing that lifts my spirits more today than the greeting, "Hi, Mayor."

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